

Message Text

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ORIGIN SS-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /011 R

66610

DRAFTED BY: EA/K:DLRANARD:LM

APPROVED BY: EA/K:DLRANARD

EA/ANP-LJMOSE

S/S-MR LUESR

----- 009820

R 302736Z JAN 74

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 014194

EXDIS

FOLLOWING REPEAT STATE 014194 ACTION CANBERRA INFO JAKARTA
LONDON MOSCOW PEKING SEOUL TOKYO 22 JAN

QUOTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 014194

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, AS, KS, KN

TOKYO FOR INGERSOLL

SUBJECT: AUSTRALIAN RECOGNITION OF NORTH KOREA

REF: 1. CANBERRA 379

2. SEOUL 484

3. SEOUL 485

4. TOKYO 787

1. AUSTRALIAN EMBASSY POLITICAL COUNSELOR WILLIAMS CAME IN
UNDER INSTRUCTIONS JANUARY 21 TO INFORM SNEIDER THAT
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AUSTRALIA PLANNED TO OPEN NEGOTIATIONS WITH NORTH KOREA

LATER THIS WEEK IN JAKARTA WITH A VIEW TO ESTABLISHMENT OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS. HE SAID THAT AUSTRALIA HAD ALREADY INFORMED ROKG TO THIS EFFECT, BUT ESPECIALLY WANTED U.S. TO KNOW AS WELL.

2. WILLIAMS MADE ONLY LIMITED PRESENTATION, RELYING INSTEAD ON PAPER RATIONALIZING REASONS FOR AUSTRALIA'S DECISION, WHICH HE PASSED TO SNEIDER. PAPER EMPHASIZES FOLLOWING POINTS: (A) AUSTRALIA ENCOURAGED BY CONSENSUS ON KOREAN QUESTION AT UN; (B) WHILE DISAPPOINTED AT LACK OF RECIPROCAL MOVEMENT BY DPRK ALLIES, AUSTRALIA HAD CONCLUDED THAT HER REPRESENTATIONS AT THIS TIME ARE UNAVAILING; (C) AUSTRALIA'S SUPPORT FOR CONCEPT OF UNIVERSALITY;

(D) DPRK IS EFFECTIVELY IN CONTROL OF CLEARLY DELINEATED TERRITORY; (E) SOME 24 COUNTRIES HAVE DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH BOTH GOVERNMENTS, WHILE SEVERAL HAVE CONSULAR RELATIONS; AND (F) AUSTRALIA BELIEVES THAT STEP SHE NOW PROPOSES TO TAKE WILL NOT ADVERSELY AFFECT SECURITY INTERESTS OF ROK. WILLIAMS ADDED THAT AUSTRALIA HOPED ROK WOULD REACT CALMLY SO AS NOT TO CREATE POLITICAL PROBLEMS IN AUSTRALIA ITSELF, AND, MORE IMPORTANTLY, SO AS NOT TO PROVIDE NORTH KOREA WITH ANYTHING TO "CROW ABOUT".

3. IN RESPONSE, SNEIDER STATED HE FOUND AUSTRALIA PROPOSAL MOST DISAPPOINTING, STRESSING NEGATIVE IMPLICATIONS ON GOA'S IMAGE IN ASIA, ROKG'S INTERESTS, AND PROSPECTS FOR BILATERAL TALKS BETWEEN NORTH AND SOUTH. HE RECALLED THAT AUSTRALIA HAS HAD A LONG AND HISTORIC INVOLVEMENT IN THE KOREAN PROBLEM, DATING BACK BEFORE THE WAR, AND, ACCORDINGLY, THOUGHT PROPOSAL TO ESTABLISH RELATIONSHIPS WITH NORTH KOREA HAD FAR MORE SIGNIFICANCE THAN THAT OF OTHER COUNTRIES (FOR EXAMPLE, MALAYSIA AND SINGAPORE) WHO ARE LESS INVOLVED REGIONALLY. AUSTRALIA'S ACTION WOULD NOT BE HELPFUL IN HOLDING THE LINE, COULD PUT PRESSURE ON OTHERS TO DO LIKEWISE, AND WAS HARDLY COMPATIBLE WITH HER DESIRE TO PLAY IMPORTANT AND RESPONSIBLE ROLE IN THE REGION.

4. AS CONCERNS IMPACT ON KOREAN PENINSULA, AUSTRALIAN ACTION WOULD BE REGARDED AS VICTORY FOR PYONGYANG.
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AUSTRALIA, SAID SNEIDER, WAS DELUDING ITSELF IN HOPING FOR UNEMOTIONAL RESPONSE FROM SEOUL; OBVIOUSLY SEOUL WOULD HAVE TO OBJECT BECAUSE OF IMPACT OF ACTION ON ROK IMAGE AS WELL AS HER DIPLOMACY TOWARD NORTH. IN THIS CONTEXT, ONE-SIDED MOVEMENT BY FRIENDS OF ROK TOWARD NORTH, WITHOUT RECIPROCAL MOVES BY ALLIES OF NORTH, WAS OBVIOUSLY INJURIOUS TO ROK IMAGE. REFERRING TO RECENT NORTH KOREAN PROVOCATIONS REGARDING NORTHWEST ISLANDS, SNEIDER THOUGHT TIMING OF

AUSTRALIAN ACTION WAS UNFORTUNATE.

5. SAYING HE WOULD BE GLAD TO DISCUSS MATTER FURTHER, SNEIDER URGED THAT AUSTRALIA TAKE ANOTHER LOOK AT DECISION, PARTICULARLY IN LIGHT OF IMPLICATIONS OF THE ACTION REGIONALLY. HE WONDERED WHY AUSTRALIA HAS NOT IMPRESSED DIRECTLY ON PYONGYANG THAT, WHILE PREPARED TO MOVE TOWARD DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS, AUSTRALIA COULD NOT DO SO UNTIL FRIENDS OF NORTH MOVED SIMILARLY TOWARD THE SOUTH.

6. WILLIAMS LEFT LITTLE DOUBT THAT AUSTRALIAN DETERMINATION ALL BUT FINAL, BUT STATED HE WOULD REPORT FULLY DEPARTMENT VIEWS. HE ADDED HE UNDERSTOOD PLANS DID NOT INCLUDE OPENING OF A MISSION IN PYONGYANG, BUT THAT PROBLEM WAS TO BE DISCUSSED IN JAKARTA. KISSINGER UNQUOTE KISSINGER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PFOR, TOKYO FOR INGERSOLL
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 30 JAN 1974
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974STATE014194
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: EA/K:DLRANARD:LM
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: RR
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: SECSTATE WASHDC
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t1974014/aaaaadcx.tel
Line Count: 131
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ORIGIN SS
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: 1.CANBERRA 379, 2.SEOUL 484, 3.SEOUL 485, 4.TOKYO 787
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 05 JUN 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <05 JUN 2002 by kelleyw0>; APPROVED <24 DEC 2002 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: AUSTRALIAN RECOGNITION OF NORTH KOREA
TAGS: AS, KS, KN
To: WELLINGTON
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005